

Message Text

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C O N F E D E N T I A L SEOUL 6746

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PINR, PDIP, KS, US
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON KCIA DIRECTOR

1. ALTHOUGH BULK OF MY FIRST CONVERSATION WITH KCIA DIRECTOR KIM JAE KYU WAS ON THE UNHAPPY SUBJECT OF KIM DONG JO, WE ALSO DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF ROKG BEHAVIUR IN THE US AND HUMAN RIGHTS. REGARDING THE FORMER, I SPOKE ROUNDLY ABOUT OUR IMPRESSION THAT IN CONTRAST TO A FEW YEARS AGO KOREAN OFFICIALS WERE NOW ACTING MORE CAUTIOUSLY AND FOLLOWING MORE GENERALLY OBSERVED PRACTICES IN THE U.S. I SAID THIS WAS WELCOME. IT SHOULD NOT ONLY IMPROVE THE ROK'S IMAGE IN THE U.S. BUT WOULD ALSO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE KOREAN TARGET FOR CRITICISM SUCH AS THAT IN THE RECENT SENATE REPORT ON KOREAN INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES. KIM DID NOT RESPOND IMMEDIATELY, BUT AT THE END OF OUR CONVERSATION ON OTHER MATTERS HE CAME BACK TO THE POINT TO STATE THAT HE HAD ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO KCIA TO CUT BACK OPERATIONS IN THE U.S. TO NORMAL LIAISON AND INTELLIGENCE FUNCTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH A FRIENDLY STATE AND TO DESIST FROM THE VARIETY OF ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS THE KCIA HAD TAKEN ON DURING PAST YEARS. IN ADDITION, HE HAD SEVERELY REDUCED THE NUMBER OF KCIA OFFICIALS IN THE U.S. AND HAD REPLACED THE DIRECTOR OF KCIA/WASHINGTON WITH A RESPECTED OFFICER WHOSE ACADEMIC BACKGROUND SHOULD MAKE HIM FULLY APPRECI-
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 06746 011103Z

TIVE OF AMERICAN CONCERNS.

2. ON HUMAN RIGHTS, I NOTED THAT THIS HAD BEEN ONE OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS AFFLICTING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH KOREA IN RECENT YEARS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO, IF AMERICANS SENSED A DETERIORATION. I ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE WAS HIGHLY COMPLEX INVOLVING DIFFICULT DEFINITIONS AND

GAPS IN CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING. NEVERTHELESS, AMERICANS, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT, FELT STRONGLY ABOUT THE ISSUE. MORE-OVER, I SHARED THESE CONCERNS AND WOULD PURSUE THEM, ALBEIT IN A REALISTIC MANNER. KIM REPLIED AT SOME LENGTH IN ESSENTIALLY FAMILIAR TERMS. HE SAID THE ROKG HAD GONE OUT OF ITS WAY TO ADOPT A LOW PROFILE RESPONSE TO DISSIDENTS. AS LONG AS THERE WERE LAWS THERE WOULD BE SOME VIOLATORS BUT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TRY TO MINIMIZE PUNISHMENT BY LIMITING IT TO PERSONS WHO WOULD COMMIT FURTHER OFFENSES WHILE EASING PRESSURES ON THOSE WHO WERE REPENTANT. ON AUGUST 15, CHRISTMAS, AND NEW YEARS, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE ITS POLICY OF PRISONER RELEASES (HE DID NOT SPECIFY CATEGORIES OR INDIVIDUALS, AND I DECIDED NOT TO PRESS HIM AT THIS TIME).

3. COMMENT: I THINK THE KCIA DIRECTOR WOULD HAVE BEEN SURPRISED IF I HAD NOT RAISED THESE ISSUES WITH HIM, AND I AM SURE HE EXPECTS MORE MESSAGES FROM ME ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE IN THE FUTURE.HIS COMMENTS ON KCIA ACTIVITIES IN WASHINGTON PRETTY MUCH ACCORD WITH OUR OBSERVATIONS. HIS COMMENTS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS REFLECT NOTHING NEW BUT WILL ALLOW ME TO CONTINUE A DIALOGUE WITH HIM.
GLEYSTEN

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